

## FORGET POLITICS, WE NEED HEALTH REFORM NOW!

In my forty years of advocating for seniors to be afforded a better quality of life, never have I advised seniors to support legislation that wasn't in their best interest, and I am not starting now. However; as I stated in a previous column, let's leave politics out of the health Care Reform issue for just once, and be real Americans who want to do the right thing for our seniors and the other 46 million uninsured Americans.

I am amazed at the misinformation being touted. The insurance industry and their allies are spending millions of dollars in an attempt to mislead the public, and seniors in particular are being subjected to all kinds of scare tactics. Since space is limited here, I am only going to give you the important highlights of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

This Act will reform our broken healthcare system by strengthening Medicare, cutting costs, protecting a patients' choice of their doctor, and ensuring quality, affordable care for all Americans. The legislation is fiscally responsible. It cuts the federal deficit by \$130 billion in the first ten years and by an estimated \$650 billion in the second ten years.

The bill is good for seniors because it strengthens Medicare and reduces the cost of prescription medications. In fact, AARP and the Alliance for Retired Americans have endorsed the bill among many others. Despite the scare tactics of those defending the health care status quo, guaranteed Medicare benefits will not change one bit when the bill is passed. You can bet the farm on this!

Currently, 52,800 Nevada seniors hit the Medicare "donut hole". The Act will shrink the size of this gap while offering 50% discounts for brand-name drugs and biologics purchased by low and middle-income beneficiaries in the coverage gap. The bill will strengthen Medicare by offering all of Nevada's 328,000 Medicare beneficiaries' free preventive services like mammograms and prostate cancer screenings.

The Act will also hold insurance companies accountable by injecting much needed competition into the healthcare marketplace to keep costs down while banning discrimination against the elderly, women, and those with pre-existing conditions.

I was fourteen years old when then President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced Social Security and remember the death threats and terrible name calling, saying he was financially ruining America forever. Sound Familiar?

If Congress doesn't pass this bill, another forty years could go by before a President tries this again! Look what it's done to President Obama. Its Christmas folks, Christ's birthday, and what better present than affordable insurance for all His children, not just the chosen few! God bless every one of you and have a great new year!